

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

ROSEMARY DONAHOO,
Plaintiff,
v.
OMNI HOTELS MANAGEMENT
CORPORATION, and DOES 1-10,
Defendants.

Case No.: 16cv1340 JLS (KSC)

**NOTICE AND ORDER SETTING
EARLY NEUTRAL EVALUATION
CONFERENCE**

IT IS ORDERED that an Early Neutral Evaluation of your case will be held on **August 10, 2016 at 9:30 A.M.** in the Chambers of Magistrate Judge Karen S. Crawford, United States District Court, 333 West Broadway, Suite 1010, San Diego, California 92101. The following are **mandatory** guidelines for the parties preparing for the Early Neutral Evaluation Conference.

1. **Purpose of Conference:** The purpose of the Early Neutral Evaluation Conference ("ENE") is to permit an informal discussion between the attorneys, parties, and the settlement judge of every aspect of the lawsuit in an effort to achieve an early resolution of the case. All conference discussions will be informal, off the record, privileged and confidential. Counsel for any non-English speaking parties is responsible for arranging for the appearance of an interpreter at the conference.

1 2. **Personal Appearance of Parties Is Required:** All parties, adjusters for
2 insured defendants, and other representatives of a party having full and complete authority
3 to enter into a binding settlement, and the principal attorneys responsible for the litigation,
4 must be present in person and legally and factually prepared to discuss settlement of the
5 case. Full authority to settle means that the individuals at the ENE be authorized to fully
6 explore settlement options and to agree at that time to any settlement terms acceptable to
7 the parties. *Heileman Brewing Co., Inc. v. Joseph Oat Corp.*, 871 F.2d 648, 653 (7th Cir.
8 1989). The person needs to have “unfettered discretion and authority” to change the
9 settlement position of a party. *Pitman v. Brinker Int’l, Inc.*, 216 F.R.D. 481, 485-486 (D.
10 Ariz. 2003). One of the purposes of requiring a person with unlimited settlement authority
11 to attend the conference is that the person’s view of the case may be altered during the
12 face-to-face conference. *Pitman*, 216 F.R.D. at 486. Limited or sum certain authority is
13 not adequate. *Nick v. Morgan’s Foods, Inc.*, 270 F.3d 590, 595-597 (8th Cir. 2001).
14 **Counsel appearing without their clients (whether or not counsel has been given**
15 **settlement authority) will be cause for immediate imposition of sanctions and will also**
16 **result in the immediate termination of the conference.**

17 3. **Full Settlement Authority Required:** In addition to counsel who will try the
18 case, a party or party representative with **full settlement authority** must be present for the
19 conference. In the case of a corporate entity, an authorized representative of the
20 corporation who is not retained outside counsel must be present and must have
21 discretionary authority to commit the company to pay an amount up to the amount of the
22 plaintiff’s prayer (excluding punitive damage prayers). The purpose of this requirement is
23 to have representatives present who can settle the case during the course of the conference
24 without consulting a superior. Counsel for a government entity may be excused from this
25 requirement so long as the government attorney who attends the ENE conference (1) has
26 primary responsibility for handling the case; and (2) may negotiate settlement offers which
27 the attorney is willing to recommend to the government official having ultimate settlement
28 authority.

1 4. **Confidential ENE Statements Required:** No later than seven (7) days
 2 before the ENE, the parties shall submit confidential statements of five pages or less
 3 directly to the chambers of Magistrate Judge Crawford outlining the nature of the case, the
 4 claims, and the defenses. **These statements shall not be filed or served on opposing**
 5 **counsel.** They can be lodged via email at efile_crawford@casd.uscourts.gov. If exhibits
 6 are attached and the total submission amounts to more than 20 pages, a hard copy must be
 7 delivered directly to chambers.

8 5. **New Parties Must Be Notified by Plaintiff's Counsel:** Plaintiff's counsel
 9 shall give notice of the ENE to parties responding to the complaint after the date of this
 10 notice.

11 6. **Case Management Under the Amended Federal Rules:** In the event the
 12 case does not settle at the ENE, the parties can expect to leave the ENE with Rule 26
 13 compliance dates or deadlines. Parties shall therefore be prepared to discuss the following
 14 matters at the conclusion of the ENE conference:

15 a. Any anticipated objections under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure
 16 26(a)(1)(E) to the initial disclosure provisions of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure
 17 26(a)(1)(A-D);

18 b. The scheduling of the Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(f) conference
 19 within 24 days following the ENE:

20 c. The date of initial disclosure and the date for lodging the discovery plan
 21 within 14 days following the Rule 26(f) conference; and,

22 d. The scheduling of a Case Management Conference pursuant to Federal
 23 Rule of Civil Procedure 16(b) within 21 days following the Rule 26(f) conference.

24 The Court will issue an order following the ENE addressing these issues and setting
 25 dates as appropriate.

26 7. **Requests to Continue an ENE Conference:** Local Rule 16.1(c) requires that
 27 an ENE take place within 45 days of the filing of the first answer. Requests to continue
 28 ENEs are rarely granted. However, the Court will consider formal, written *ex parte* or joint

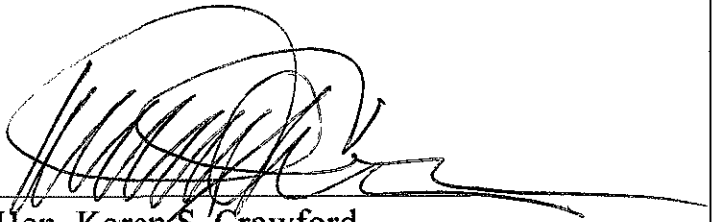
1 requests to continue an ENE conference when extraordinary circumstances exist that make
2 a continuance appropriate. In and of itself, having to travel a long distance to appear in
3 person is not "extraordinary." Absent extraordinary circumstances, requests for
4 continuances will **not be considered unless submitted in writing** no less than seven (7)
5 days prior to the scheduled conference.

6 Questions regarding this case or the mandatory guidelines set forth herein may be
7 directed to the Magistrate Judge's law clerks at (619) 446-3964.

8 A Notice of Right to Consent to Trial Before a United States Magistrate Judge is
9 attached for your information.

10 **IT IS SO ORDERED.**

11 Dated: July 1, 2016

12 
13 Hon. Karen S. Crawford
14 United States Magistrate Judge
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

NOTICE OF RIGHT TO CONSENT TO TRIAL
BEFORE A UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF 28 U.S.C. § 636(c), YOU ARE
HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT A U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE OF THIS DISTRICT MAY,
UPON THE CONSENT OF ALL PARTIES, ON FORM 1A AVAILABLE IN THE
CLERK'S OFFICE, CONDUCT ANY OR ALL PROCEEDINGS, INCLUDING A JURY
OR NON-JURY TRIAL, AND ORDER THE ENTRY OF A FINAL JUDGMENT.
COUNSEL FOR THE PLAINTIFF SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING THE
CONSENT OF ALL PARTIES, SHOULD THEY DESIRE TO CONSENT.

YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT YOUR DECISION TO CONSENT OR NOT
TO CONSENT IS ENTIRELY VOLUNTARY. ONLY IF ALL PARTIES CONSENT
WILL THE JUDGE OR MAGISTRATE JUDGE TO WHOM THE CASE HAS BEEN
ASSIGNED BE INFORMED OF YOUR DECISION.

JUDGMENTS OF THE U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGES ARE APPEALABLE TO
THE U.S. COURT OF APPEALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS STATUTE AND
THE FEDERAL RULES OF APPELLATE PROCEDURE.